

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MONROVIA 2598

EXDIS

DEPT PLEASE PASS NSC FOR BRZEZINSKI AND RICHARDSON

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OVIP (CARTER, JIMMY)
SUBJECT: PRESIDENT CARTER'S VISIT TO LIBERIA

REF: MONROVIA 2506

1. AS PARTICIPANTS WILL RECALL, A NUMBER OF SIDEBAR CONVERSATIONS ENSUED DURING COURSE OF MONDAY, 3 APRIL WORKING LUNCHEON BUT BILATERAL DISCUSSIONS IN WHICH MOST OF US PARTICIPATED COULD BE BROKEN DOWN INTO THREE CATEGORIES: AGRICULTURE, HEALTH AND SECURITY.

2. UNDER AGRICULTURE, PRESIDENT TOLBERT AND MINISTER PHILLIPS DISCUSSED LIBERIA'S INTEREST IN SUPPORT FOR TREECROP DEVELOPMENT DESIGNED TO INCREASE PRODUCTION OF PALM OIL, COFFEE AND COCOA. THERE WAS GENERAL DISCUSSION ON THIS SUBJECT IN WHICH PRESIDENT CARTER ALSO PARTICIPATED, UTILIZING HIS SPECIALIZED KNOWLEDGE OF GROUND NUTS, BUT NO DECISIONS OR RECOMMENDATIONS WERE TAKEN. IT WAS NOTED THAT U.S. IS ALREADY SOMEWHAT INVOLVED IN THE PALM OIL INDUSTRY IN LIBERIA AND QUESTIONS FROM THE USG SIDE STRESSED LIBERIA'S PLANS FOR SMALL FARMER INCLUSION.

3. UNDER DISCUSSION ON HEALTH THE EXCHANGES CONCENTRATED
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ON RIVER BLINDNESS, A DISEASE DESCRIBED BY PRESIDENT TOLBERT AS AFFECTING AT LEAST HALF THE POPULATION IN CERTAIN RURAL SUBDIVISIONS OF THE COUNTRY. TOLBERT AND MINISTER OF JUSTICE (FORMERLY HEALTH MINISTER) OLIVER BRIGHT ASKED THAT U.S. CONSIDER SUPPORT FOR A REGIONAL RESEARCH CENTER ON ONCHOCERCIASIS. SECRETARY VANCE POINTED OUT THAT USAID IS ALREADY DOING SOME WORK ON THE SUBJECT, THAT WE WOULD UNDERTAKE TO DETERMINE

WHETHER LIBERIA COULD BE INCLUDED IN THE REGIONAL PROGRAM
ALREADY ESTABLISHED.

4. THE DISCUSSION UNDER SECURITY FLOWED FROM PRESIDENT CARTER'S
OBSERVATION THAT THE GOL WISHED TO OBTAIN ADDITIONAL PATROL
VESSELS UNDER THE FMS PROGRAM IN FY-1980. TOLBERT LAMENTED THE
SMALL ALLOCATION IN THE FY-79 BUDGET AND SAID YES, THAT THE GOL
DID ANTICIPATE "AN ADDITIONAL SHIP OR TWO" BY 1981 TO HELP
IN POLICING ITS WATERS. TOLBERT AND MINISTER OF DEFENSE
BURLEIGH HOLDER CLAIMED THAT THE SOVIETS WERE RAPING LIBERIA'S
WATERS OF VALUABLE FISH. PRESIDENT CARTER RELATED USG'S
EXPERIENCE WITH THE SOVIETS AND ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE SITUATION
WAS NOT IMPROVED UNTIL SEVERAL VESSELS AND THEIR CAPTAINS
WERE BROUGHT TO STATESIDE PORTS AND COURTS. PRESIDENT CARTER
EXPRESSED INTEREST IN GOL'S REQUEST FOR PATROL EQUIPMENT AND
ASKED THAT THE BITUATION BE REVIEWED BY (AND HERE I AM UNCERTAIN)
SECRETARY VANCE OR NSC DIRECTOR BRZEZINSKI.

5. EMBASSY RAPPORTEUR SUFFERS SOMEWHAT IN FULFILLING HIS
ASSIGNMENT BECAUSE HE COULD NOT JOIN THE VARIOUS SUB-GROUPINGS
AROUND THE TABLE. THIS PROBLEM IS ADDITIONALLY COMPOUNDED BY
THE FACT THAT SUBSTANTIVE EXCHANGES OCCURRED BETWEEN USG AND
GOL PRINCIPALS RIDING TO AND FROM THE AIRPORT. FONMIN DENNIS
HAS PROMISED TO PROVIDE AMBASSADOR WITH A DEBRIEFING ON HIS
EXCHANGES WITH SECRETARY VANCE BUT WE MAY FIND IT DIFFICULT
TO RESURRECT FRAGMENTS OF CONVERSATIOES BETWEEN OTHER PRINCIPALS.
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6. MINISTER TOWNSEND TOLD AMBASSADOR THAT PRESIDENTS CARTER
AND TOLBERT DISCUSSED THE INROADS BEING MADE BY COMMUNISM IN
AFRICA IN THEIR PRIVATE DISCUSSIONS WHILE TRAVELING IN FROM THE
AIRPORT. TOWNSEND SAID TOLBERT REVEALED THAT HE HAD CALLED
IN THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR AT THE TIME THE GOL WAS THROWING OUT
THE TASS CORRESPONDENT FOR INTERFERENCE IN INTERNAL LIBERIAN
AFFAIRS AND WARNED THE AMBASSADOR THAT ANY SIMILAR INVOLVEMENTS
WOULD RESULT IN THE AMBASSADOR'S BEING ASKED TO LEAVE. TOLBERT
IS REPORTED TO HAVE SPOKEN TO PRESIDENT CARTER OF INCREASING
MARXIST ACTIVITIES IN LIBERIA, CITING THE UNIVERSITY OF LIBERIA
AND THE RADICAL ORGANIZATION SUSUKUU AS BEING DANGER SPOTS.

7. ALL OF THE ABOVE, ACCORDING TO TOWNSEND, OCCURRED WHILE THE
TWO PRESIDENTS WERE DISCUSSING THE GENERAL SUBJECT OF SECURITY
(TOWNSEND SAID THE SECURITY DISCUSSION DEVELOPED WHEN PRESIDENT
TOLBERT SOUGHT ADDITIONAL FINANCIAL SUPPORT FROM USG FOR THE
ARMED FORCES OF LIBERIA.) ACCORDING TO TOWNSEND, TOLBERT
REPORTED PRESIDENT CARTER'S ATTITUDE AS SYMPATHETIC AND RECEPTIVE.

8. THIS MESSAGE SHOULD BE READ WITH THE CAVEAT THAT IT IS AN
UNCLEARED DRAFT AND THE HOPE IS EXPRESSED THAT WASHINGTON

PARTICIPANTS WILL FLESH OUT THE CATEGORIES AS REQUIRED.

CARTER

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED NSC.

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